The Eight Defilements talk, Thur 18 Dec 2025

Bhante Rakkhita Samanera:
Inspired by Master Cheng Yen's Wisdom at Dawn.

Thur talk 3, 18 Dec'25. Eight Defilements

Bhante Rakkhita Samanera addressing the Thursday Group:

'So you told me this is the thirsty group. You're all thirsty, are you all thirsty for Dhamma?

You come here on Thursday because you're so thirsty. Outside we've got the hungry goats, inside we've got the thirsty Dhamma practitioners.

All that COVID and everything, you're all still thirsty for Dhamma. Great. Everything, Is everyone comfortable?

Let's see. All right.

Has everyone had a good week? In managing to practise and sit a little bit here and there, 10 minutes, 30 minutes, 20 minutes you can make progress.

Just make a little bit of time and it will add up with the support of the group.

I was very pleased to see we've now got a WhatsApp group. So it's very easy to communicate and share.

So all of these talks I'll record and then share on the group. So you can just listen back if you didn't hear something or you were sleeping or you're just meditating and you missed something or you want to hear it again, you can just play and that. And then people who like reading, some people who love to read, I will get it turned into a script so you can easily just read back and then do it in slowly and absorb it.

So then it also can go in deeper. You can reconsider it. And the other talks as well, there's like, this is number three.

So we should begin by the sila. It's a paying homage to the Buddha, the Dharma, the Sangha, three times to make it go deep. And then we should also take our precepts, five precepts.

And then I'll do a 30 minutes or 20 minutes Dharma talk, a little bit of time for some question and answer. And then we'll do a 30 minute sitting. For those of you like really like

question and answer, you can also contact me through the WhatsApp group and just leave an audio, you know, your question.

I'll also answer leaving an audio. So if time is too compressed now and you don't want to share in front of other people, but you have questions, we can work that. Let's start with paying homage to the Enlightened Buddha.

Refuge, Homage, and Chanting.

Let's chant together.

Namo tassa bhagavato arahato sammasambuddhassa.
Buddham saranam gacchami.
Dhammam saranam gacchami.
Sangham saranam gacchami.

Dutiyam pi buddham saranam gacchami.
Dutiyam pi dhammam saranam gacchami.
Dutiyam pi sangham saranam gacchami.

Tatiyam pi buddham saranam gacchami.
Tatiyam pi dhammam saranam gacchami.
Tatiyam pi sangham saranam gacchami.

Ti saranam kamanam nitittam

ama Bhante.

The Five Precepts.

Pāṇātipātā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṁ samādiyāmi.

Adinnādānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṁ samādiyāmi.

Kāmesu micchācārā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṁ samādiyāmi.

Musāvādā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṁ samādiyāmi.

Surā-meraya-majjapamādaṭṭhānā veramaṇī sikkhāpadaṁ samādiyāmi.

Imani panca sikha padani samādiyāmi,

Imani panca sikha padani samādiyāmi,

Imani panca sikha padani samādiyāmi,

Imani panca sikha padani samādiyāmi,

Silena bhoga sampada.
Silena nibbutim yanti

tasma silam vissodaye.

Sadhu, sadhu, sadhu.

I would like to talk today on the subject of
Eight Defilements.

Relax your body….

And just Breath… listen attentively…

Make yourself comfortable so your joints aren't in strong pain.

You don't get any benefit or extra points for hurting more.

And try to relax your shoulders.

Let them go back a little.

Open your chest. Breathe comfortably.

People have different methods and focus.

Some people focus on the lip.

Some people focus at the entrance of the nose.

Some people focus higher inside the nose.

Some people focus on the rising and falling of the abdomen.

These are all fine and you can also move between them.

Or if you have other methods, please feel comfortable in doing that.

So I'm going to give a talk today.

It's inspired by a talk by Master Cheng Yen, who I consider one of my teachers.

She's the founder nun who founded Tzu Chi.

I found many of her talks extremely inspiring.

So it's going to be on eight defilements.

We can think of defilements as similar to when someone has a cataract in their eye.

This is something like….
if we have a spiritual eye….
Then defilements are something like a cataract on our heart.
It's something that makes us hard, something that makes us rebellious.

So there's the subject.

So just relax your body. Listen attentively.

Bodhi hearts.
We're so lucky to be the heirs to Bodhi hearts.

The surroundings here, they're so calm.

They're very clear and green.

The surroundings here are so calm and clear.

Is our sincerity in practice as vast as the calm clear universe?
We say 'vows that are as vast as the universe'.

They remain unwavering for countless lives…. For many aeons.

That timeless state of mind is what we Buddhist practitioners seek.

So we must enter the broad noble path,
even if our minds feel like they are not defiled.

We want to live among people and sentient beings and yet not be swayed by mundane states.

Although we live in the sensory realm, our minds can transcend defilements.

It is very important to transcend the confusion of the sensory realm.

How can we escape this impure, defiled mundane realm?

That is what we must learn.

Five People And Objects Worthy Of Respect.

Buddha taught that there are Five people and objects worthy of respect.
1. The Buddha.
2. The Dhamma teachings.
3. The Sangha community.
4. Our Teachers.
5. Our Parents.

He also taught to always cultivate generosity, kindness, compassion and unconditional love.

Buddha extended his protection and empowerment into this world where a great many are in need, lacking resources, less fortunate.

There are those in poverty, there are those who are sick and ill.
Then there are the animals which need care, kindness not cruelty.

Conversly there is phenomena of disrespecting these Five people and objects.
Conversly there are behaviours and attitudes which result in neglecting to protect and assist those in weakness, misfortune, lacking resources, awareness, wisdom or insight.

These Eight Defilements may cause all wrongdoings.

We have eight defilements.

Eight defilements are eight types of contamination.

These defilements are indecencies or toxicity that pollute us.

When we talk about the Eight Defilements, there are eight main types.

The Eight Defilements are:

1. **Disrespecting Buddha,**
2. **Disrespecting Dharma,**
3. **Disrespecting Sangha,**
4. **Being unfilial to parents,**
5. **Disrespecting teachers,**

6. **Not helping the poor,**
7. **Not assisting the sick,**
8. **Having no mercy for suffering animals.**

The first three are about the defilement of disrespecting.

Disrespecting the three treasures, Being unwilling to praise, or Affirming them, Having evil thoughts.

This means that people not only refuse to believe because they have no faith, they are unwilling to pay respect.
They are unwilling to express their faith.
To express their faith with actions, with speech and with thoughts.

Not only are they unwilling to bow and praise, their minds also bear unwholesome thoughts.
Their threefold karma : actions, speech and thoughts, are defiled.
Without a pure mind, our threefold karma is already defiled.

The fourth is being unfilial to parents.

Where did our bodies come from?
karmic seeds and affinities with our parents caused us to be born to this set of parents in this particular family.
We are then cared for by our parents.

We must be grateful and dutiful toward our parents, children, siblings, etc. .
When we came into this world, we received our parents' love and affection.

They cared for us from birth.
As we mature, we have families and careers, and our parents grow old.
That is when we should give back to them.

When we are neither accommodating nor filial towards our parents, we are unfilial.
This is called being rebellious.
One who is rebellious is unfilial.

This is called being unfilial to parents.
The heart is already defiled when one is uncaring and unprincipled.
Our parents have cared for us since we were born.

Now that we are grown, we should repay them.
When we are rebellious and unfilial, our hearts are contaminated and we go against the principles.

The fifth defilement is disrespecting teachers.

Our parents have cared for us since we were born.
We have gradually matured and have our own families and careers.
To be able to make a living, we needed to learn starting at a young age.

In the past, many people did not have the opportunity to go to school, but they had skills that enabled them to make a living.
They used to say, seek and respect the teacher.
To obtain a skill, one needs a teacher, a teacher to pass on the trade.

Some say it takes three years and four months to learn carpentry.
During that time, one should respect the teacher to learn his skills.

It also takes over three years to become a seamstress, during which the apprentices do odd jobs for their teachers to learn the trade.

They are dutiful and respectful.
Regardless of the trade, after leaving their teacher, they are forever grateful.
The teacher imparted a skill that allowed the apprentices to make a living.

That is respecting the teacher.

It is a principle of being human.
One should be grateful for learning a way to lead a peaceful, stable life.

We are more fortunate today because our society values education and has established many schools.
Now education is even more refined.
To have deep knowledge, teachers must study a lot.

They must broaden their knowledge to pass it on to new generations.
Teachers today are different from teachers of the past.

So we must be grateful.

Only if we respect the teacher can their lessons enter our minds.
If we do not respect them, no matter how earnestly they teach, it does nothing for us.
The knowledge is in vain.

When the mind is defiled and polluted, craving fun and entertainment and wasting time, then one cannot learn.
The mind is already defiled.
So in terms of education, very few succeed.

There are many who study, but few who are accomplished.
It is difficult for people today to achieve major success because their hearts are contaminated. And people refuse to respect their teachers.

This is a mental defilement.
When there is a defilement in the mind, people refuse to respect their teachers.
So they cannot receive teachings.

When the teachings cannot enter their minds, they have difficulty accomplishing anything.

The sixth defilement is not helping the poor.

Why would someone not help the poor?
Because they are greedy, and they lack love.

They cling to wealth and are never satisfied.
They are not content, because they lack love.
This is spiritual poverty.

Why does anyone lack love?
Because one is attached to greed.
With greed, one is always lacking.

When there is not enough for oneself, how can one give to others?
A mindset of poverty comes from being greedy.

When one is greedy, the heart feels deprived.
Because of this, one refuses to help the needy.

Some people seek fame when they give.
That is greed for fame.

Some donate to the poor for recognition.
That is impure.

Such a mind is also defiled.

Or some help others in order to gain merits, which is greed for merit.

Then there are those who help others in order to negate bad karma.

All of these are wrong.

We must truly eliminate mental defilements. Such as greed.

Helping the poor is following the principles.

It is our duty.

If we are living well, and help the needy with our surplus, we are on the right path.

To sum it up, if we do not follow the principles, it is still considered defilement.

So, not helping the poor is the sixth defilement.

When the heart is filled with desire, and lacks love, one does not help the poor.

If one can eliminate the defilement in the heart, and truly help those in need, one is on the true path.

The seventh is not assisting the sick.

Life is full of suffering. The sick suffer most among the suffering.

We should be compassionate and care for the sick.
We should be compassionate toward the sick.

Some people are even afraid of contact with their own sick relatives.

This is not in accord with principles.

So, not caring for the sick is also a defilement of the mind.

Eighth is having no mercy for suffering animals.

Animals live in suffering.
One of the three lower destinies is to be an animal.

So, we should have sympathy for all animals.

The Buddha taught that all beings have the potential to eventually develop and walk the path, and so we should respect all lives and show compassion to them.

This is the kind of universal kindness or loving-kindness we should cultivate.

So, we should respect all lives.
This is the transcendent love we should possess.

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There are three fields of blessings.
Gratitude, reverence and compassion.

1. **Reverence** is respect for the three treasures.

2. **Gratitude** is being filial to parents, and respecting our teachers.
We need to be full of respect and gratitude.

3. The last three are the field of **compassion**.
They are about helping those in need.

Field of reverence, respect Buddha, Dharma, Sangha.
Field of gratitude, be filial to parents. And respect teachers.
Field of compassion, help the poor, care for the sick,, have mercy for all.

Everyone in [Bodhi Hearts]
you have been cultivating the eight fields of blessings.

We respect, pay reverence and praise the three treasures.
We are respectful in action. Speech and thought.

That is called the field of reverence.
We have been accomplishing this.

[All Bodhi Hearts practicioners] know to be grateful toward their parents, teachers and elders.

We have also been accomplishing that.
We have been accomplishing reverence and gratitude.

Next, we have been working hard to help the poor and suffering.

Sincere practicioners and volunteers are those human people, kindest of people, who appear wherever there is suffering.

Regardless of how arduous the task, we still find a way to comfort and care for those in need.
Old or young, crippled or ill, the caring people, the living hearts are the first to be there by their sides.

Fields Of Blessings.
[from the Recollection of the reverence for the Sangha community]

Āhuneyyo pāhuneyyo dakkhiṇeyyo añjalikaraṇīyo.
Anuttaraṃ puññakkhettaṃ lokassā ti.

The unsurpassed field of merit for the world.

So, We should be like farmers, ploughing the fields of blessings.

But with a defiled mind,
not only do we refuse to create blessings,
we are disrespectful,
ungrateful
and uncompassionate towards sentient beings.

If we split up these three,
then there are eight types of defilements,
which easily give rise to karmic suffering.

Everyone, from where does karma arise?

Mostly from defilements of the mind.

Defilements of the mind go against the truth.

How do we thoroughly comprehend the truth?
By adhering to the principles.

How can we transcend
the inverted, distorted views of the unenlightened… towards people, matters and things?

We apply the principles while dealing with people, matters and things.

If we can do this, we will not be tainted by these defilements and will remain calm and lucid with vast vows and unwavering conviction.

There are many fields of blessings in the world for us to cultivate.

What we need are living bodies, good people, at first to mindfully tend to those fields.

So everyone, please mindfully cultivate the field of blessings in your heart.

We must always be mindful.

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